DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 275 139 FL 016 037

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TITLE The Organization of Interaction in Elementary Classrooms.
PUB DATE Mar 83
NOTE 17p.; In: Handscombe, Jean, Ed.; And Others. On TESOL '83. The Question of Control. Selected Papers from the Annual Convention of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (17th, Toronto, Canada, March 15-20, 1983); see FL 015 035.
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Bilingual Education; Classroom Communication; *Classroom Environment; Classroom Observation Techniques; Elementary Education; *English (Second Language); *Interaction; Large Group Instruction; *Limited English Speaking; *Power Structure; Research Methodology; Second Language Instruction; Small Group Instruction; Teacher Student Relationship

ABSTRACT

Despite the surrounding controversy, second language instruction for America's language minority children is an important educational issue for continued methodological innovation and examination. The most effective and productive classroom interaction processes and dynamics in bilingual and second language instruction are still not appropriately described. Researchers must work to measure the effects of particular instructional approaches on student learning outcomes and to "unpackage" those approaches and accurately describe what they entail. Using the technological tools of videotaping and the methodological tools of microethnography, researchers are just beginning to construct the detailed, multifaceted description of the processes of classroom interaction, and use it to facilitate second language learning in limited English-speaking children. (MSE)

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The Organization of Interaction in Elementary Classrooms

D. Scott Enright

INTRODUCTION

The pedagogical issue of how best to provide America's limited English speaking (LES) children with the necessary instruction for efficiently learning English as a second language (ESL) and for giving them access to the educational resources provided by the schools has long been embedded in the political issue of howimmigrant and non-English speaking minorities should be treated within the context of American culture. Ever since the U.S. Congress in 1965 and the U.S. Supreme Court in 1974 provided the clear legal mandates for the implementation of *billingual education* programs specifically designed to meet LES children's needs, these two dimensions have remained intractably (and some would say disastrously) intertwined, with political considerations dictating the setting of educational practice, and vice versa.

Unfortunately, creation of federal funding for the establishment and maintenance of bilingual education programs at the local level was not accompanied by any clear guidelines as to the ways these programs should be designed. This was to be expected given the fact that very little research had been conducted up to that point about how children learn a second language at home and at school. But this timing resulted in a rapid proliferation throughout the 1960's and 1970's of various *programs, models,* and *approaches* for providing this much-needed instruction. The criteria upon which these approaches were based were often more political than pedagogical in nature, and commonly reflected the views shared by the schools and/or school-districts regarding the actual and desired status of LES students' native language and culture rather than English or learning in general. Thus, an early criterion which was used to classify bilingual education approaches was on the basis of their intention to either nurture native cultural characteristics and language skills as well as to provide English instruction (*maintenance* programs) or to establish Anglo-American cultural characteristics and English language skills as rapidly as

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possible (*transitional* programs), and programs were often funded by national, state, and local legislative bodies on the basis of these classifications.[1]

Also reflecting the heavy political influence on early bilingual education theory, a second major criterion upon which programs were commonly classified involved the way(s) in which English as well as native language(s) students brought to the classroom were to be allocated or distributed within the classroom. The names of the approaches usually reflect these distributional considerations: thus on the broadest level, *bilingual education* programs seem to presuppose the use of both the child's native language and English for instructional purposes and *English as a Second Language* (ESL) programs seem to presuppose only English instruction. Within these broad categories, parallel subcategorization seems to go on, with the implementation of such bilingual education approaches as the *dual language* approach (two adult instructors, one of whom instructs in the child's native language, and one of whom instructs in English), the *simultaneous translation* approach (all English instruction repeated in the native language, usually within the same lesson or activity), and even the *dual language and ESL* approach (two instructors with the English instructor also providing ESL instruction to LES children on a regular basis).[2]

In their efforts to establish an empirical base for the effectiveness (or ineffectiveness) of bilingual education as quickly as possible, many educational researchers sidestepped the implicit political questions involved in this conceptualization of bilingual education approaches and instead concentrated on attempting to identify the effects (the *products*) of the various approaches in terms of LES students' English acquisition, academic achievement, school attendance, and a host of other products which indicate educational *success*. Studies of this nature locate and compare large numbers of classrooms or programs which purport to be conducting second language instruction using one approach or another, and the approaches thereby become the *independent variables* to be examined. A famous example of such a product study is the national American Institute of Research (AIR) study of public school bilingual education programs which was published and widely disseminated in 1977.[3]

This tacit acceptance by many educational researchers of what is at heart a politically defined scheme for identifying and labeling second language programs led to two important results. The indirect result of this acceptance was to reify the aforementioned distributional approaches in both the academic and the public consciousness, as well as to give them credibility as different *instructional* rather than distributional approaches. And due to the lack of a clear trend in the reported results of these studies, a more direct result of this acceptance was to feed back into the political arena by providing further impetus for the continuing political hubbub over

[1]Kjolseth (1982) discussed the political criteria used in organizing bilingual programs as he views them, and provides an alternative classification scheme for bilingual program as either assimilationist or pluralistic.

[2]Fishman and Lovas (1970) propose a sociolinguistic typology for the classification of bilingual programs primarily based on these allocational considerations. For an additional review of the many different types of bilingual education programs that have been developed since the Bilingual Education Act, see Blanco (1977).

[3]Zappert and Cruz (1979) reviewed a large number of these product-oriented studies and summarized the results of those they felt were methodologically sound.

which second language instructional approach is *better* and therefore is deserving of further financial support. This hubbub culminated in the 1983 amendments to the Bilingual Education Act submitted to Congress by the Education Department on behalf of the Reagan administration, and which were described by Education Secretary Terrell H. Bell in the following manner (1983):

> Under current law the Department is precluded from funding projects which do not use the child's native language in instruction to some extent. The proposed amendments would allow the Department to fund whatever educational approach a school district believes warranted, so long as that approach is designed to meet the special educational needs of the population and can be justified as appropriate by the school district. This modification would bring the program into agreement with current research indicating that no one approach is superior for meeting the special needs of limited English proficient students in all circumstances. (p. 2)

Once again, education and educational research are being intertwined with politics and political ends, in this instance in a very deliberate manner (one cannot help but speculate that bilingual educators and researchers have contributed to their own dilemma). And after more than a decade of continuing research and experimentation, there appears to be no more of an informed consensus as to how to get on with the business of educating America's LES students than there was when the national bilingual education movement began.

Several explanations have been offered to explain the mixed research results in the field of bilingual education cited by Secretary Bell and his conclusion that no single second language *instructional approach* has emerged as clearly obtaining the best results in terms of LES students' educational success. The first places the blame on the political dimensions of the question which have previously been alluded to, stating that *success* itself is defined differently within the various approaches (for example, maintenance of the native language might be viewed as necessary to the success of one approach and as unnecessary to the success of another) and that such differences must be taken into consideration in measuring and comparing the effects of these approaches. A second explanation, and one which is quite frequently invoked when the effects of any particular educational treatment prove to be mixed or inconclusive, is that the approaches being examined were improperly or unevenly implemented by practitioners (that is, school-districts and teachers), and that if the quality of implementation could be controlled, one or another of the approaches would emerge as better. A third explanation, and one which is often raised as a counter to those offering the second explanation, is that the designs of the studies attempting to gauge the relative success of the various second language instructional approaches were flawed and that these studies did not really measure what they said they measured. Also, paralleling the second explanation, this third explanation concludes that if the quality of the research studies could be controlled, one or another of the approaches would again emerge as better.

But there is a fourth explanation which could be offered to explain the supposedly mixed research results in the field of bilingual and second language instruction, one which encompasses all of the previous three, and that is that the coherent, consistent approaches being identified and compared by researchers throughout the past 15 years never really even existed, or at least not in the forms in which they were being examined as different sorts of treatment variables. Perhaps

the entire *conceptualization* of second language-instruction approaches as conceived by early theorists is the problem, making definitions of success, consistency in practice, and adequate empirical design rather moot considerations. This explanation has become increasingly frequent as researchers within the field of American bilingual education have turned from examining only the *quantitative products* of second language instruction to additionally examining and describing the *qualitative processes* of second language instruction which co-occur with those products within and across individual classrooms and amongst particular teachers and students. This naturalistic research parallels a similar development in the general educational research literature on the processes of *classroom interaction* (the communicative and behavioral exchanges occurring amongst classroom participants).

While it is not within the purview of this paper to review the different methodologies which have recently been applied to examine the processes of classroom interaction and/or second language instruction as they have developed in America,[4] it should at least be mentioned that two different and equally significant disciplines have entered the *qualitative* research literature on the processes of bilingual education: linguistics and anthropology. Prompted by linguists' interest in child language acquisition (e.g., Bowerman, 1973; Brown, 1973; Clark, 1973; Slobin, 1970) educational researchers have extended those methods to literacy, bilingual education, and classroom language learning. Linguistic studies in classrooms have adopted both quantitative and qualitative designs depending on the nature of their research question (e.g., measuring the *effects* of a particular language-teaching curriculum vs. describing the strategies used by early primary children to communicate in unfamiliar social situations). Sociolinguists interested in the *social* construction and utilization of language (Cazden, 1978; Cherry-Wilkinson, 1978; Cook-Gumperz & Gumperz, 1976; Ervin-Tripp, 1977; Garvey, 1975) have made a particularly large contribution to this body of work and were among the first researchers to combine quantitative and qualitative methods in studying classroom language. Similarly, using the traditional tools of the anthropologist, researchers in both the regular classroom (Green & Wallat, 1981; Heath, 1983; Labov, 1973; Mehan, 1979; Rist, 1973; Smith & Geoffrey, 1968; Spindler, 1974) and in the bilingual classroom (Erickson & Mohatt, 1982; Philips, 1971, 1982; Trueba, et al., 1981) have examined the social institution of American education and the "culture of the classroom, spending months and sometimes years in a single classroom, school, or speech community as participant observers collecting ethnographic data. Through their efforts at "making the familiar strange" (Spindler, 1982), these investigators have helped educators develop a fresh perspective in coping with all-too-familiar realities, and have suggested new solutions to persistent educational problems, as well as new foci for quantitative researchers to address in their continuing work.

It may be useful to think of the various studies of classroom interaction and second language instruction as lying on a research *continuum*, from those studies which rely the most heavily on quantitative methods in their design to those which rely the most heavily on qualitative methods in their design. On one end of the continuum would be found the correlational *product* studies previously described, and on the other end would be the general ethnographic studies conducted over a

[4]For reviews of the literature in these areas, see Corsaro (1981) and Ramirez (1980).

long period of time, with studies using the techniques of systematic observation (Flanders, 1970; Legarretta, 1977, 1979; Medley et al., 1973), speech act and discourse analysis (Dore, 1977; Genishi, 1978; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975), and microethnography and microanalysis (Erickson & Shultz, 1981; Green & Wallat, 1981) being found at various points in between. The work conducted at each point along this hypothetical continuum makes a different contribution to the ongoing efforts to understand and to improve the enterprise of second language instruction, and gains meaning and perspective from the insights provided by the rest.[5]

The aim in the rest of this paper is to suggest an alternative conceptualization of the way in which second language instruction is organized, based on two longitudinal studies of classrooms representing all three of the general forms of instruction found in the literature on bilingual education (bilingual classrooms, ESL classrooms, and regular or mainstream monolingual classrooms) and based on the linguistic and anthropological work from which these studies emanated (the *process* end of the continuum). In the first study, two bilingual kindergartens were observed over a period of 22 weeks and three pairs of students from the classrooms were recorded and their language use analyzed. In the second study, five students were recorded and observed as they participated in both their homeroom classrooms (five different ones) and in their ESL *pullout* classrooms (three different ones).[6] Both studies were conducted using a combination of ethnographic techniques—including participant observation and formal and informal interviewing—and sociolinguistic techniques—including speech act and "constitutive ethnographic" analysis of recorded speech samples (Mehan, 1979), and are more fully reported elsewhere (Enright, 1982; Enright & Wood, 1983). The data reported here are drawn from the first study (Enright, 1982) though the paper as a whole is informed by both.

THE CLASSROOM INTERACTION HIERARCHY

Teachers often complain that they are bypassed in considerations of curriculum adoption, school organization, and other educational matters which directly affect the circumstances of their employment. Educational reformers and curriculum writers in their turn have complained that it is extremely difficult to change education because of the resistance of teachers to changing their instructional habits. The publication of *Pygmalion in the Classroom* (Rosenthal & Jacobsen, 1968), along with the subsequent controversy which arose surrounding its methodology and conclusions regarding the potency of teacher expectations, and the rather large and diverse literature which has sprung up in recent years regarding the dimensions of *teacher effectiveness* (Brophy & Evertson, 1976; Gage, 1972; Kounin, 1970) are just two examples of the importance placed by educators on the *teacher effect* or the *teacher variable* operating in classrooms.

When the focus on the organization of second language instruction shifts from the distributional considerations already described to how individual teachers organize the interaction (verbal and nonverbal) which occurs in their classrooms,

[5]This continuum is more fully discussed elsewhere (Enright, 1983).

[6]A *pullout* ESL program is a program in which students are *pulled out* of their homerooms to be given specific ESL instruction at designated times. In the school in this study, LES students in the school left their homerooms twice each day to go to one of three different ESL classrooms elsewhere in the building.

quite a different conceptualization of second language instructional approaches emerges. It is the contention here that the allocation of native language and English language use as well as other matters of language practice and language learning are closely related to the ways that individual teachers conceive of the general teaching and learning process. That is, in determining how s/he believes children should think (and learn), how children should feel, and more generally, how children should behave in the classroom, the teacher also makes tacit decisions about how language will be used and learned in his or her classroom. Often these tacit decisions are in direct conflict with the teacher's stated beliefs about how s/he allocates and teaches language—they form part of the *hidden curriculum* of language learning in the classroom, if you will. Thus, there may be as many or more differences between the actual patterns of language use and language learning in two classrooms which are classified by the teacher and by others as using the *same* distributional approach, for example, two bilingual kindergartens in a school which has adopted a *dual language* approach to second language instruction and which has retained teachers and paraprofessionals to implement this approach (Enright, 1982) as between two classrooms in which LES students are enrolled and language is taught and used but which are classified differently, for example, a mainstream kindergarten and an upper grade level ESL pullout classroom in the same school which has adopted a pullout program of language instruction (Enright and Wood, 1983). As research into the processes of first and second language acquisition continues to develop and to uncover the ways in which different human beings go about developing fluency in one or more languages, it becomes increasingly necessary to also uncover these tacit dimensions of classroom language use in order to determine the relationship between the two processes.

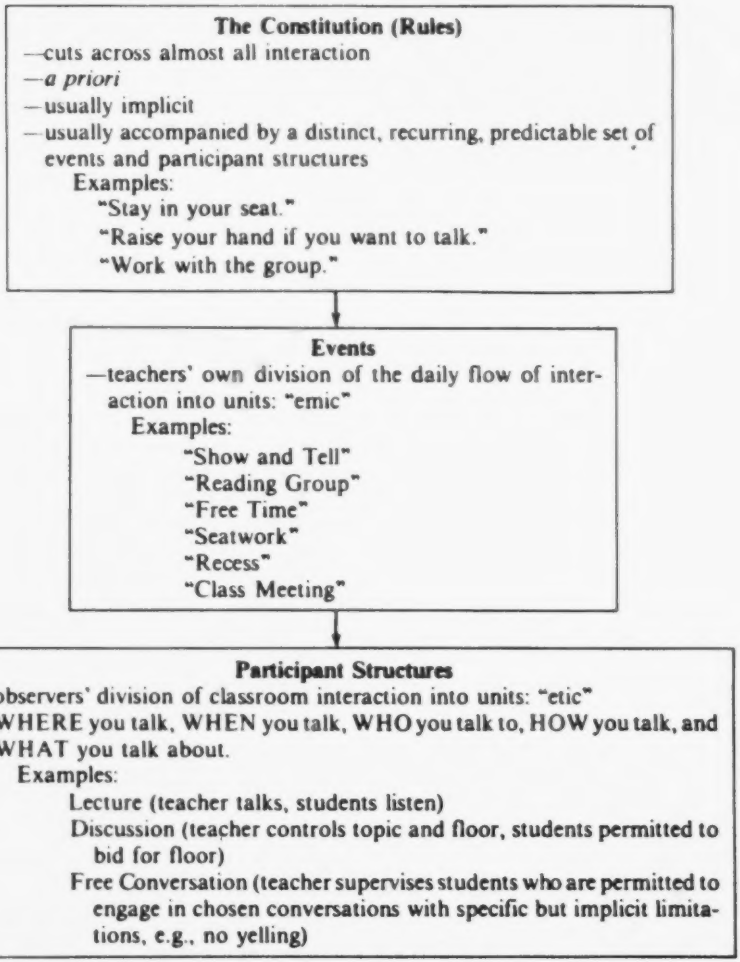
One way in which to view the way that teachers organize interaction in their classroom over the course of an academic year is as a hierarchy of *interactive decisions*, with each level of decision embedded in the higher levels and at least partially determined by those larger decisions. As with most hierarchies, these divisions are largely artificial (that is, it is impossible to point out where one level of decision-making begins and another ends) and are made in order to assist in elaborating upon the decision-making process. Figure 1 presents the classroom interaction hierarchy.

The Classroom Constitution (Rules)

At the top of the classroom interaction hierarchy are the rules that the teacher chooses to structure interaction in general. These rules form what Sarason (1971) calls the classroom "constitution", those a priori rules established by teachers in anticipating instruction, and which they invariably fall back on during moments of interactional confusion or flux. In general, these high-order rules are either completely tacit or are stated explicitly near the beginning of the year[7] and then become internalized by the students until their governance becomes tacit. The rules of the constitution appear to be understood (if not always obeyed) by students, violations of these rules have clear and usually immediate consequences, and these

[7]In many American classrooms the classroom constitution is prominently displayed on a bulletin board or blackboard somewhere in the room, although after a certain period of time, it is practically never referred to. In one of the schools of the studies summarized in this paper, one of the most popular substitute teachers carried her classroom constitution (written on tagboard) with her and displayed it in whatever classroom she happened to be teaching in that day.

Figure 1: The Classroom Interaction Hierarchy


The Constitution (Rules)
—cuts across almost all interaction
—a priori
—usually implicit
—usually accompanied by a distinct, recurring, predictable set of events and participant structures
Examples:
"Stay in your seat."
"Raise your hand if you want to talk."
"Work with the group."
Events
—teachers' own division of the daily flow of interaction into units: "emic"
Examples:
"Show and Tell"
"Reading Group"
"Free Time"
"Seatwork"
"Recess"
"Class Meeting"
Participant Structures
—observers' division of classroom interaction into units: "etic"
—WHERE you talk, WHEN you talk, WHO you talk to, HOW you talk, and WHAT you talk about.
Examples:
Lecture (teacher talks, students listen)
Discussion (teacher controls topic and floor, students permitted to bid for floor)
Free Conversation (teacher supervises students who are permitted to engage in chosen conversations with specific but implicit limitations, e.g., no yelling)

rules rarely change or are suspended. Rather, specific interaction within the daily life of the classroom is organized within the verbal and behavioral parameters established by them.

While Sarason (1982:216) correctly points out that the classroom constitution is completely determined by the teacher, individual teachers differ as to the kind of constitution that they use within their classrooms. Thus the interaction that is mandated by the constitution and the degree to which students may negotiate interaction and determine their own interactive fate within the classroom varies widely from teacher to teacher, even amongst teachers who are supposedly implementing the same bilingual education approach. This is illustrated in Table 1, which presents the classroom constitutions of the two ***dual language*** bilingual

kindergarten teachers who were observed in the first study. These two teachers will henceforth be referred to by the pseudonyms of Mrs. Shaw and Mrs. Blake. Within Table 1, the rules presented within quotations were actually stated in that form by the teacher during instruction; the remaining rules were compiled by the investigator from the complete sociolinguistic and ethnographic data.

Table 1: Two Kindergarten Constitutions
(C = Corollary)

Mrs. Shaw's Constitution	Mrs. Blake's Constitution
Fullgroup and Smallgroup	*Fullgroup and Smallgroup*
1. Look at the teacher (without speaking).	1. "Go with what you've got." (1C) It is better to speak and be wrong than not to speak at all.
2. Do not speak unless you are spoken to.	2. If you have something to say, say it. ($2C^t$) Say what you think. ($2C^f$) Say what you feel. ($2C^k$) Say what you know. ($2C^w$) Say what you want ("Ask and ye shall receive").
3. Avoid speaking unless it is clearly appropriate.	3. Don't interrupt (including in speaking). (3C) Don't hurt others (including in speaking).
Independent	*Independent*
4. Do, don't talk.	4. Work with the group (including in speaking). (4C) Help your friends (including in speaking).

Mrs. Shaw and Mrs. Blake worked in the same school, drew their students from the same target population, taught in architecturally identical classrooms, had roughly the same (25) years of teaching experience, were undergoing the same training to receive permanent certification as bilingual teachers, and received the same resources (for example, a Spanish-dominant paraprofessional, inservice workshops, special curriculum materials) and dictates as to how to use them from the district bilingual office. But there the similarity ended. For these two teachers also brought different teaching experiences, cultural backgrounds, and life experiences into their classrooms. Their goals for their students' education and their philosophies regarding the way(s) children learn and the way(s) instruction should be organized were also very different, with Mrs. Shaw's philosophy and *press to achieve* typically referred to in the early childhood education literature as a *traditional*, or *teacher-centered* philosophy, and Mrs. Blake's philosophy and *press to interact* typically referred to as an *open* or *child-centered* philosophy (Barth, 1971; Bussis & Chittenden, 1973). Similarly, the materials used by these two teachers, the arrangement of their classroom furniture, the way(s) in which they chose to utilize their paraprofessionals in the classroom, their construction of a curriculum and of the social relations amongst classroom participants, and finally, their organization of interaction within their classrooms widely differed in spite of their mutual designation as *dual language* classrooms. Long before the children entered the classroom for the school year, these two teachers had created different expectations

and demands for comportment in their classrooms—different classroom constitutions.

Mrs. Shaw's classroom rules may be divided between the first three, which are in force whenever she is directly involved in classroom interaction, and the fourth, which is in force whenever the children are working independently but under her supervision. These rules combine to make Mrs. Shaw the primary focus and the primary (and often the only) mediator of interaction in her classroom, and each of the rules serves by itself and in combination with the others to limit the amount of language which is used, to limit initiations, to tightly control peer-interaction, and to maximize silence and conformity to the teacher's wishes and the teacher's own way of interacting.

In contrast, Mrs. Blake's rules, which are in force for all the interaction in her classroom, combine to create quite the opposite effect from what Mrs. Shaw's rules accomplish. In Mrs. Blake's room, individual students and groups of students are the primary focus of the interaction that takes place. There is a large amount of *negotiated* interaction both between adults and students and amongst the students themselves in Mrs. Blake's classroom, and student initiations, peer interaction (even within activities in which the teacher is present) and language use in general are maximized.

Events

At the second level of the classroom interactive hierarchy are the teachers' interactive decisions regarding the segments of interaction, or *events*, that they use to carry out their instructional agenda throughout the school day. Classroom events are *emic* units of interaction in that they represent the teacher's *own* conceptualization of how the flow of interaction in his or her classroom is divided up and conducted. Especially in elementary classrooms, where teachers are expected to develop children's skills and knowledge in a wide variety of content areas, teachers label their events explicitly for their children and refer to them directly as they teach, thereby cueing students as to the way(s) in which they will be interacting during the next few moments. "You may now have free time," "Bluebird reading group, come over to the table," and "Put away your workbooks and line up, it's time for recess" are examples of this labeling and cueing.

Teachers define their events in terms of the subject matter and the learning goal or product to be accomplished by the event (what students are to *do* and to *learn* within the segment of interaction—for example, to learn how to read); the grouping to be used in the event (for example, small group plus teacher, individuals working on their own but under the teacher's supervision); the materials which will be used in the event (for example, workbooks and pencils, blackboard and chalk, nothing); and the physical locale in the classroom where the event is to take place (for example, *on the rug*, *at your seats*). And though the interaction within an event is mediated by the overall classroom constitution, each of the teachers' events also has its own particular organization, procedures, and specific application of (and occasional exception to) the rules of the classroom constitution.

The teacher also has a specific *array* of events which s/he repeatedly uses throughout the school year. Often a teacher's events are explicitly set within an unvarying time of the day (for example, reading groups held from 9:30 to 10:15) and

Table 2: Mrs. Shaw's Array of Events

Grouping	Event	Avg. Daily Duration
Full Group and Teacher (with or without aide)	Paper-Instructions	6 min.
	Lessons (Sci/Math/Basic C./Lang. Arts)	10 min.
	Story/Movie	12 min.
	Music/Movement	6 min.
	Drill/Practice	7 min.
	Other	2 min.
Small Group and Teacher or aide	ESL/SSL	10 min.
	Skills	19 min.
	Other	2 min.
Individualized	Cooperative: Assigned Seatwork	22 min.
	Independent: Free Time*	7 min.
	*Cooperative Subevents in Free Time:	
	Art Center, Skill Center, System 80	3 min.
	Reading Group	4 min.

in an unvarying part of the room (for example, reading groups held at a specific table in the back of the room). Mrs. Shaw's and Mrs. Blake's arrays of events are displayed in Tables 2 and 3, and are subdivided by the grouping criterion they are organized under.

Mrs. Shaw and Mrs. Blake spend roughly the same amount of time within the three broad grouping categories of full group, small group, and individualized

Table 3: Mrs. Blake's Array of Events

Grouping	Event	Avg. Daily Duration
Full Group and Teacher (with or without aide)	Lessons	5 min.
	Activities	5 min.
	Story/Movie	13 min.
	General Meeting (incl. Sharing)	8 min.
	Music/Rhythm	3 min.
	Other (Art)	2 min.
Small Group and Teacher or Aide	Skills	35 min.
	Other	3 min.
Individualized	Cooperative: Book Time	8 min.
	Independent: Free Time*	25 min.
	*Cooperative Subevents in Free Time:	
	Art	2 min.

instruction, but when the arrays of events which subdivide these categories are elicited, the differences in the interactive decisions the teachers make at this level of the interactive hierarchy become apparent. For example, both teachers conduct what they refer to as fullgroup *lessons* and *music* or *movement* activities in their classrooms, but the average amounts of time they spend within these events varies considerably, with Mrs. Shaw spending twice as much time with her class in the lesson event as Mrs. Blake and Mrs. Blake spending twice as much time with her class in the music/movement event as Mrs. Shaw. In the small group category, Mrs. Shaw organizes regular ESL and Spanish as a Second Language (SSL) events in her classroom and Mrs. Blake does not. And in the category of individualized events, while both teachers devote approximately the same amount of daily classtime to this kind of grouping, Mrs. Shaw uses it to give individual assignments of *her own choosing* to the students to complete silently at their seats (*assigned seatwork*), and Mrs. Blake uses it to give the students time to engage in a wide variety of *self-selected* activities (*free time*, which might include blockplay, painting, working puzzles, sewing, etc.). All of these differences have important consequences for differences in the language use and ways of behaving that students display in the two classrooms.

Participant Structures

At the lowest level of the classroom interaction hierarchy are the teachers' interactive decisions regarding the moment-to-moment interaction that is to take place within the various events that the teacher chooses to organize the students' time in school. Participant structures are *etic* units of interaction in that they generally represent the *observer's* conceptualization of how the flow of interaction in a given classroom is being divided up and conducted. As Erickson and Shultz (1981) define them, participant structures are the "differing configurations of concerted action" that occur from moment to moment as the participants in a given event or social situation construct interaction and adjust their definitions of the "rights and obligations" of the participants and their relationships with each other as the event unfolds. Shifts in participant structures may occur quite often during a single event. Often teachers are at least partially aware of these shifts when they make them, and again cue students as to their imminent occurrence (for example, "Now that I've read you this story, I want you to tell me what happened one at a time"). Negotiating a single participant structure involves participants *knowing* or agreeing upon *when* they will interact (turn-taking); *who* they will interact with (the relative status and control of the interaction by various participants within the event); *how* they will interact (the nonverbal dimensions of the interaction such as kinesics, proxemics, gestures and facial expressions, postural configurations, rate of speech, pauses, etc.); and *what* they will interact about (the topic or focus of the moment and the acceptable variations upon or shifts from that topic). Erickson and Shultz describe the various dimensions of participant structures as including "ways of speaking, listening, getting the floor and holding it, and leading and following." The examples of participant structures provided in Figure 1 are very rough approximations of the very intricate but also rhythmic and coordinated shifts in interactive patterns which often occur within a single classroom event and which may be much further subdivided through microanalysis of the visual records (videotapes) of these interactions. Such microanalysis involves analysis of the verbal and nonverbal

dimensions of each interaction, the context of the interactions, and the time frame (sequence and duration) of the interactions.

Just as the constitutions and arrays of events that Mrs. Shaw and Mrs. Blake choose differ, so do the participant structures they employ in their daily classroom interaction. This includes the teachers' use of different participant structures within what they perceive to be (and label) the *same* event, such as the *lesson* event, and even within different instances in their *own* teaching of a given event (e.g., Monday's high reading group versus Monday's low reading group, or Monday's high group versus Friday's high group). As a gross illustration, Mrs. Shaw uses two primary types of participant structures in her lessons with students. In the first structure, which resembles a *lecture*, Mrs. Shaw introduces a concept to the students through the presentation of some object or picture and oral explanation and/or demonstration of it. During this participant structure, Mrs. Shaw sits or stands with the children in front of her and the blackboard behind her, and the children are seated on the floor. Mrs. Shaw is the only interlocutor during this participant structure, and children are required in this structure to: (a) remain silent, and (b) keep their apparent attention focused completely on the teacher. If Mrs. Shaw moves, the children must immediately and quietly re-orient themselves to her new position. In the second participant structure of Mrs. Shaw's lessons, a *turn-taking* structure, some or all of the students take turns answering questions about the just-introduced concept or performing some activity (for example, putting colored felt cats with the appropriate color name labels on a felt board) with the teaching materials of the lesson. The number of children in the turn-taking structure and the number of repetitions of this structure within a single lesson depends upon other considerations such as the teacher's perception of the difficulty of the concept being taught. As mentioned before, when the recorded instances of these primary participant structures are subjected to full microanalysis, they may be further subcategorized as one or more of the components of the participant structure are varied (e.g., a turn-taking structure during which children remain motionless and respond orally and a turn-taking structure in which the children go to the teacher and blackboard and perform some operation). Examples of this further subanalysis may be found in Bremme and Erickson (1979), Erickson and Shultz (1981), Enright (1981), and Enright and Woods (1983).

To illustrate how the differences in the participant structures within various events are accompanied by differences in language use, Tables 4 and 5 present the proportions of speech acts defined as utterances or parts of utterances which convey a clear meaning which were measured for the events in which adults were present with their students in Mrs. Shaw's and Mrs. Blake's classrooms over a two-day period.

As might be expected from what is already known about Mrs. Shaw's constitution, the participant structures used in her events differ less than they do with Mrs. Blake, where there is much more room for students to determine the participant structures. This is reflected in the proportions of adult and student speech acts measured within individual events, with Mrs. Shaw's proportions of the speech acts in 8 of the 11 events in which she was present falling into the 60 to 65 percent range, but with Mrs. Blake's proportions in her events ranging from 42.7 per cent to 73.2 percent. Even when Mrs. Blake is recorded in the same event (an English *skills* group) but on three different occasions, there is a considerable difference in her proportion of the discourse (from 52.2 percent to 65.7 percent), and microanalysis of

Table 4: Proportions of Adult and Student Speech Acts in Mrs. Shaw's Recorded Fullgroup (FG) and Smallgroup (SG) Events

Event	Adults			Students
	Teacher %	*Aide %*	*Totals %*	
FG, *Money* (Lesson)	64.8%	7.2%	72.7%	27.3%
FG, *Paper Instr.*	62.2%	2.6%	64.8%	35.2%
SG, *ESL*	64.2%	0.02%	64.1%	35.5%
Sub (SG), *Reading*	64.1%	——	64.1%	35.9%
FG, *Personal Pronouns* (ESL)	62.0%	——	62.0%	37.9%
FG, *Paper Instr.*	62.0%	14.8%	76.8%	23.2%
		(Investig.)		
SG, *English Skills*	60.0%	3.0%	63.0%	37.0%
FG, *Zoo Review* (Lesson)	60.0%	1.5%	61.6%	38.4%
FG, *Letter Practice* (Drill)	55.4%	15.0%	70.4%	29.6%
FG, *Jazz Chant* (Language Arts)	57.0%	——	75.0%	43.0%
FG, *Paper Instr.*	76.7%	8.2%	84.9%	15.1%
SG, *Spanish Skills* (Taught by Aide)	——	45.6%	45.6%	54.4%

these occasions indicates clear differences in the participant structures which were utilized on each occasion to conduct the topically similar agenda of the event.

CONCLUSION

In spite of the considerable controversy that has arisen surrounding it, second language instruction for America's language minority children continues to be an important educational issue and one which will continue to experience methodological innovations and empirical examination. At the present time we are unable to fully describe the processes of classroom interaction in general, much less what constitutes *effective* or *productive* or *successful* classroom interaction, or what the particular dynamics and processes of bilingual and second language learning interaction involve. In addition to measuring the effects of particular instructional approaches on student learning outcomes, researchers must work to "unpackage" (Scribner, 1981) these approaches and to provide accurate descriptions of what they

Table 5: Proportions of Adult and Student Speech Acts in Mrs. Blake's Recorded Fullgroup (FG) and Smallgroup (SG) Events

Event	Adults			Students
	Teacher %	*Aide %*	*Totals %*	
SG, *Skills*	52.2%	——	52.2%	47.8%
SG, *Skills*	65.7%	——	65.7%	34.4%
		(Parent)		
SG, *Skills*	64.3%	4.1%	68.4%	31.6%
FG, *Math Lesson*	62.3%	1.1%	63.4%	36.6%
FG, *Planting* (Activity)	42.7%	0.2%	42.9%	57.1%
FG, *Story Book* (Story)	73.2%	——	73.2%	26.8%

actually entail. This paper has been one effort to provide a tentative portrayal of what is known about such processes today and to provide a framework for additional inquiry. Using the technological tools of videotaping and the methodological tools of microethnography (see Erickson, 1982), researchers are just beginning to construct the detailed, multifaceted description of the processes of classroom interaction which is required to develop further insights into how to improve that interaction and use it to facilitate LES students' second language acquisition. In general, when researchers are able to thoroughly conceptualize and describe the *means* which teachers employ to achieve their educational *ends*, they may eventually be able to help teachers adjust their means to better meet those same ends.

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